

UNITED STATE MARINE CORPS
Logistics Operations School
Marine Corps Combat Service Support Schools
PSC Box 20041
Camp Lejeune, North Carolina 28542-0041

MTAC 3102

STUDENT OUTLINE

UNIFIED COMMAND STRUCTURE

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

a. Terminal Learning Objective: Given the billet of a major subordinate command motor transport chief and references, identify the planning process, per the references. (35xx.05.02)

b. Enabling Learning Objective:

1. Given the billet of a major subordinate command motor transport chief and references, identify the components of the National Military Command structure, per the references. (35xx.05.02a)

2. Given the billet of a major subordinate command motor transport chief and references, identify the components of the Subordinate Joint Command structure, per the references. (35xx.05.02b)

3. Given the billet of a major subordinate command motor transport chief and references, identify the responsibilities of the Marine Corps component commander, per the references. (35xx.05.02c)

4. Given the billet of a major subordinate command motor transport chief and references, identify to whom the Commander, Marine Corps Force Atlantic provides support, per the references. (35xx.05.02d)

5. Given the billet of a major subordinate command motor transport chief and references, identify to whom the Commander, Marine Corps Force Pacific provides support, per the references. (35xx.05.02e)

OUTLINE

1. NATIONAL MILITARY COMMAND STRUCTURE

a. American military forces operate under a chain of command with two distinct branches.

(1) **OPERATIONAL CHAIN OF COMMAND:** For the Marine Corps, this branch runs from the President through the Secretary of Defense to the combatant commander and subordinate unified commander, joint task force, when designated and then to the Marine Corps component commander.

(a) While the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff does not exercise military command over the combatant commander, Joint Chiefs of Staff, or any of the Armed Forces, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff assists the President and Secretary of Defense in performing their command functions. The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff transmits orders to combatant commanders as directed by the President. Additionally, as directed by the Secretary of Defense, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff oversees the activities of those commands. Reports from the combatant commanders will normally be submitted through the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, who forwards them to the Secretary of Defense and also acts as the spokesman for the combatant commanders.

(2) **SERVICE CHAIN OF COMMAND:** The Service chain of command provides for preparation of Service forces and their administration and support. The Secretary of the Navy is responsible for the administration and support of Marine forces assigned or attached to each of the combatant commands. The Secretary exercises administrative control (ADCON) through the Commandant of the Marine Corps and the commander of the Marine Corps component command assigned to a combatant command.

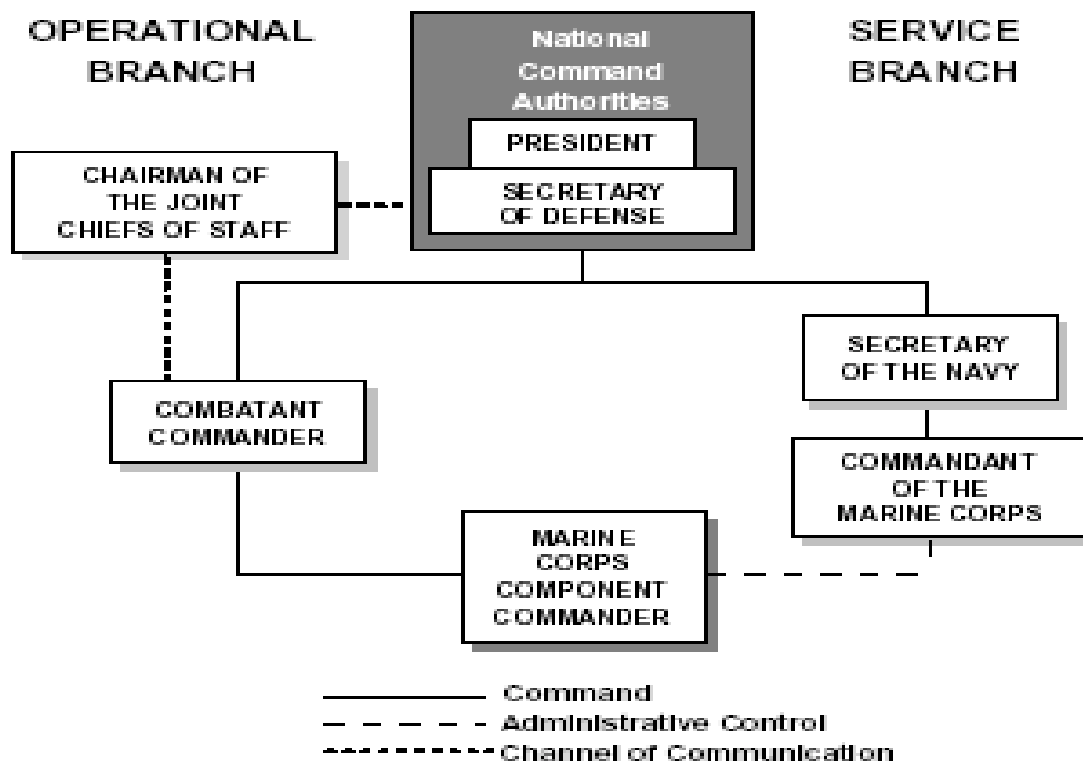
(a) The Commandant's role as a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff is as important as his duties as a Service chief. As a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Commandant:

1 Acts as a military advisor to the National Command Authorities.

2 Reviews command relationships and the use of Marine Corps forces.

3 Advises the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff on matters concerning the marine corps.

(b) Marine Corps component commanders operate within both branches of the chain of command. They respond to orders of the joint force commander in the in the operational chain of command, while being equipped, manned and supported through the Service chain of command.



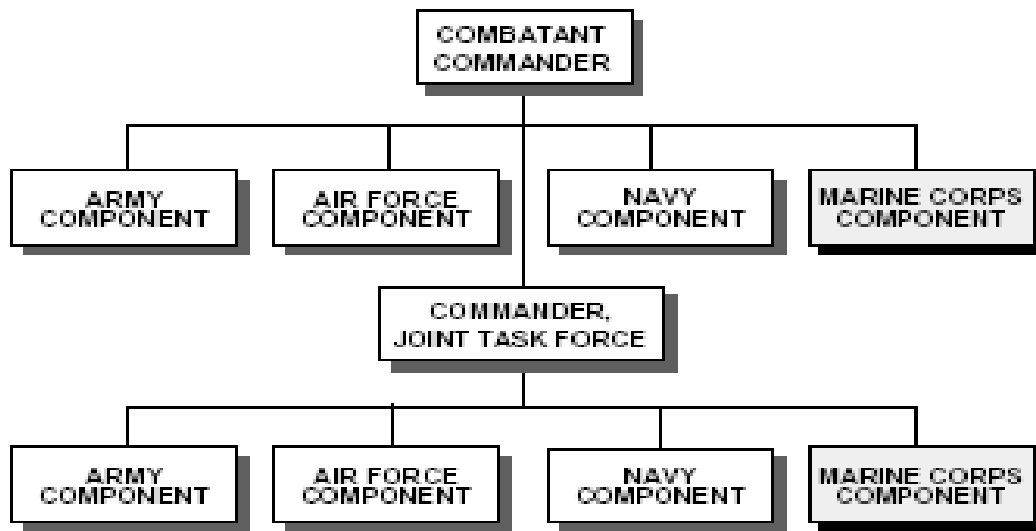
2. SUBORDINATE JOINT COMMAND STRUCTURE

a. Subordinate joint commands may be either a subordinate unified command or a joint task force. Distinctive level of authority differences exist between the combatant command and the subordinate joint force command. Unless otherwise specified, all elements of combatant command (command authority) (COCOM) remain with the assigned combatant commander. The subordinate joint force commander normally exercises operational control (OPCON) of assigned or attached forces.

b. Both the combatant command and subordinate joint force may be organized with either Service components, functional components, or a combination of the two. Both may be established in a geographic area or on a functional basis. Subordinate unified commands are established to conduct operations on a continuing basis in accordance with criteria set by the unified commander, while the joint task force has a specific, limited objective and does not require overall centralized control of logistics.

c. Like combatant commands, joint task forces contain components and are organized by Service, function, or a combination of the two. When a combatant commander determines that the Marine Corps is the appropriate Service to command a

joint task force, the combatant commander tasks the Marine Corps component commander to provide the commander, joint task force. The combatant command-level Marine Corps component commander nominates the commander, joint task force, and provides the nucleus for this joint staff from his assigned and/or attached forces. The combatant command-level Marine Corps component commander also designates the joint task force-level Marine component commander and provides the required Marine Corps forces after the commander, joint task force, determines his force requirements.



Joint task force organized by Service component.

3. MARINE CORPS COMPONENT COMMANDER

a. Marine Corps Component Commander Responsibilities.

(1) The Marine Corps component commander's primary responsibility is as a force provider and sustainer. Additional responsibilities to the combatant commander include:

(a) Making recommendations on the proper employment of Marine Corps forces.

(b) Accomplishing such operational missions as may be assigned by the combatant commander. Operational missions are normally executed by the Marine Corps component commander's assigned forces.

(c) Selecting and nominating specific Marine units or forces for assignment to other subordinate forces of the combatant command.

(d) Conducting joint training and exercises. A major focus of this training is to train the component staff to meet the standards contained in Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Manual 3500.04, *Universal Joint Task List*, and the Chief of Naval Operations Instruction 3500.38, *Naval Tactical Task List*.

(e) Informing the combatant commander of any changes in planning for logistic support that will affect the combatant commander's ability to accomplish the mission.

(f) Developing Marine Corps programming and budgeting requests to support the combatant commander's warfighting requirements and priorities and keeping the combatant commander informed of the status of these programs.

(g) Providing supporting operation and exercise plans to support assigned missions.

(2) The Marine Corps component commander provides Service logistic and administrative support using established Marine Corps procedures. The Marine Corps component commander's Service responsibilities also include:

(a) Internal discipline and administration.

(b) Training in Marine Corps doctrine, tactics, techniques, and procedures.

(c) Logistic functions normal to the command, except as otherwise directed by higher authority.

(d) Service intelligence matters and the oversight of intelligence activities according to current laws, policies, and directives.

4. MARINE CORPS COMPONENT COMMANDS

a. Although there are five Marine Corps components, there are only two Marine Corps component commands. The Marine Corps has established two combatant command-level Service component commands: Marine Corps Forces, Atlantic, and Marine Corps Forces, Pacific. The II Marine Expeditionary Force is provided by Commander, Marine Corps Forces, Atlantic, to the Commander in Chief, U.S. Atlantic Command, and the I and III Marine Expeditionary Forces are provided by Commander, Marine Corps Forces, Pacific, to the Commander in Chief, U.S. Pacific Command. This assignment reflects the peacetime disposition of Marine Corps forces. Marine expeditionary forces are apportioned to the remaining geographic combatant commands for contingency planning and are provided to the combatant commands when directed by the

Secretary of Defense.

b. The Commander, Marine Corps Forces, Atlantic, is assigned to the Commander in Chief, U.S. Atlantic Command, and the Commander, Marine Corps Forces, Pacific, is assigned to the Commander in Chief, U.S. Pacific Command. In order to provide three-star, general officer representation to the remaining three geographic combatant commands, Commander, Marine Corps Forces, Atlantic (COMMARFORLANT), is designated as the Marine Corps component commander to both Commander in Chief, U.S. European Command (CINCUSEUCOM), and Commander in Chief, U.S. Southern Command (CINCUSSOCOM). The Commander, Marine Corps Forces, Pacific, is designated as the Marine Corps component commander to the Commander in Chief, U.S. Central Command (CINCUSCENTCOM).

REFERENCES:

1. MCWP 0-1.1, *Componency*